

Implosion

Implosion #19 is the local monthly fanzine of Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107). It is produced for the 19th Distribution of Apa V, the Las Vegas apa, which has as this month's theme "Corfluvium" Today is April 29, 1995.

Implosion: The Fanzine that proves anyone can publish a fanzine.
Member, fwa.

The Road to Corflu Vegas

This distribution of **Apa V** is full of Corflu Vegas memories and anecdotes. Just to be a little different, avoid a little duplication, and save the con itself for a full-length report (Real Soon Now), I've decided to focus on the events leading up to Corflu Vegas.

In the beginning

The Los Angeles Corflu, in 1992, was the first time Joyce and I saw our our old fan friends, after our return I'd done a little apac in 1990 and stepped back into general fandom with **Folly** the next year. Joyce had resumed a little fanwriting, for **Folly** and **Glitz**, our FAPAzine. But although we got very involved with the local fan scene, we didn't rush to the nearest convention.

Back in the 1970s, we didn't realize that the big convention movement was still years in the future. Yet the increase in the size of cons, and the approach of their sponsors had already altered profoundly before Joyce and I gafiated in the mid-1970s. We never made a frmal decision to give up con-going, but I believe the Discon II was the last one we attended, even though we contiued to publish fanzines and host the Brooklyn Insurgents for several more years.

When we came back to fandom, neither of us thought much about breaking the con abstinence habit started in 1973. We attended Silvercon, but traveling to a convention didn't tempt us much.

Then someone, it may've been rich brown, told me about Corflu. The concept captivated me. It sounded like everything I

wanted in a convention. I especially liked the spirit of cooperation that prevailed over the usual fan-political warfare and pretentiousness.

I attend several electronic industry events annually. Therefore, I already knew that my vision changes, first blindness and then presbyopia, had intensified my problems in con-like situations.

I don't aspire to Harry Warner's heretofore unchallenged superamcy in the field of aversion to large fan crowds. I can't even claim decades of brilliant writing about pre-speech nervousness like Walt Willis.

Dealing properly with large groups of friends is a strain. My vision is topsy-turvy to what it was for my first 40-plus years, and I never developed the visual recognition skill to the level I would've wished. Until my eye surgeries changed me from nearsighted to farsighted, I didn't get a lot of data to process when I looked at anyone more than a couple of feet away. Now I get tons more data, but I don't pay sufficient attention to all of it or processing it properly.

It's hard for me to recognize a lot of folks right off, especially if I haven't seem them for awhile. Every mis-identification is like a chill hand clutching my guts. I worry a lot about unconsciously offending the very people whom I love most. It's a damn good thing so many fans have bolding distinguishing physical traits. I look forward to the future day when mutants will be welcomed into fandom. I'm pretty sure i can pick out fans with two heads or a cyclopean eye almost every time.

Joyce hates to drive, but that didn't stop us from motoring tog LA for Corflu. Some fans have said that the LA Corflu wasn't all it could've been, but my subjective reaction could hardly have been more favorable. Seeing everyone, relating to so many old and new friends, was a powreerful emotional experience. It may've been the best

time I've ever had at a convention, though the Madison Corflu, Magicon and Silvercons 2 and 3 have subsequently gained places among my most treasured memories.

By now, the dread is growing within you that this Corflu report is going to recapitulate my entire fan career in turgid detail. I promise that this will not happen. This is merely background to sensitize readers to how unlikely it is that someone like me would not only go to a con, but actually seek to host it.

Yet I knew I wanted to host Corflu right from that first one I attended. Surprisingly, Joyce was just as interested, although she'd vowed never to run another con after co-chairing St. Louiscon in 1969.

After discussing it with Ken Forman and JoHn Hardin, I broached the idea at the Madison Corflu in 1994. I got positive feedback, but as we were leaving the con, I learned that Jeanne Bowman was also floating a bid.

We talked it over on the phone, and Las Vegas withdrew its request to host. I thought Jeanne had a stronger claim for the right to host and figured that Vegas Fandom would be that much more ready a year or two down the line. Las Vegants, meeting regularly by this time, were a little disappointed, but all recognized it was the right thing to do.

A couple of months before Corflu Nova, I heard from Jeannue again. She explained that 1995 wasn't going to be a good year to put on a Corflu in the BArea. She asked if we'd consider putting our group forward again.

I asked for time to consult with the rest of the club. The verdict: "Go for it!" I published a flyer, spoke at the Corflu Nova banquet and returned home with responsibility for the 12th annual renewal.

More good news: I'm about to jump-cut to April 1995. Fears that I plan to cover every second between winning the bid and seeing off the last Corflu Vegas visitor are totally unfounded.

Before the Con

(but not *too* much before)

With a little help from our friendly repairman, the Gester chugged along,

shooting out pages of *Fanthology '91* at a furious rate. Ken Forman, JoHn and Karla Hardin, Ben Wilson, Cathi Copeland and Tom Springer all came over Tuesday evening to hang out and collate. The **NLE**enies also wanted to work on their part of the opening ceremony, and the affianced couple showed up with a new fanzine called **Vows** for proofreading. We got all that done and more, and even found time to sit around and speculate about what the next few days would hold for us.

Karla, who is still unused to the ways of trufandom, had asked her husband why we'd work on a conventin and then pay \$50 to attend it. I tried to answer it for her, though it's hard to gauge my success.

'Let's say you and JoHn went to dinner at the homes of seven or eight other Vegas fans. You'd eventually want to throw a dinner party to repay all the hospitality," I said. "Corflu Vegas is our chance to give all these people hospitality. That's why we want to do the convention.

"Everyone pays the fee, because the con needs the money," I continued. "Corflu isn't like other cons. I know some give free memberships and such to volunteers to work, but this is a small, intimate gathering. We're not doing this for petty perks and badges of authority. It's a way to throw a party for the people who mean the most to us."

Their enthusiasm was infectious. Hearing about all the publishing plans centered around Corflu Vegas made me change my plan to produce **Swerve #2** in late April. I stayed up later and got up early on Wednesday and finished off an eight-page issue.

Wednesday combined frantic work on several professional projects with a lot of effort to firm up fannish ones. Joyce had tabulated both the Fan Achievement Award and Fannish Feud ballots. While she produced the certificates, I generated the material needed to conduct the game on my computer.

Robert Lichtman showed up at the end of our workday to give us a breather between business and hobby work. He'd driven from Glen Ellen. Bill Kunkel and Laurie Yates had invited him to stay at their condo, only a mile away from our house. They were busy on a

book and also doing extensive interior painting, so Robert came over for awhile to socialize. Not long after his arrival, Bill and Laurie took a break.

Unfortunately, they couldn't leave their place unattended long enough to go to dinner with us. Lichtman had twice referred to himself as "Robert X," the name I'd given him in my just-released **Silvercon Memories**. We danced around the subject of where to eat until he indicated that a return visit to the Celebrity Deli would be fine with him. He even offered to redress his earlier perfidy by ordering an Arnie's Special, but I told him this wasn't actually necessary.

Not necessary for him, that is. I, of course, asked the waitress for corned beef (lean), pastrami (lean) and turkey (white meat) on rye. In this, The Year of the Corflu, traditions must be loyally observed.

For the record, Robert had lean corned beef on rye with potato salad and ice tea. Presumably, he enjoyed it, because he went there for lunch the next day.

Speculation over who'd be at Corflu was the meal's main garnish, though the cole slaw got roughly the same pitch of enthusiasm. I'd become adept at this activity by Wednesday evening, since it had become the Vegrants' favorite pastime in the weeks before the con.

Of course, Robert plays this game at the tournament level. His news sources are excellent, so he had identified most of the attendees before he reached the con. This put him several names up on Joyce and me, so he graciously let us steer the conversation to the fans whom we were most anxious to see.

As a sore loser, I must comment on the Lichtman News Network (LNN) that makes Robert such a powerful "Who's Coming to Corflu?" competitor. Does he have farflung agents who ferret out intelligence like the Shadow's assistants, or does the Lichtman home hide an ultramodern communications room? I don't know yet. Look for more details as soon as I have time to invent some.

My Vegas chums, less experienced in the ways of fandom, bring a freshness to the sport that eludes fannish veterans like Joyce, Robert and me. Thanks to the three Silvercons and other visits, they already knew some of those coming to Corflu, but many

more were previously unmet. Could Shelby Vick be *that* likable? Is Vijay Bowen as beautiful as they say? What is Geri Sullivan *really* like?

How the questions flew at our frequent get-togethers! Hearing them wonder about first meetings reminded me of the agonies of anticipation I felt as I rode the subway to my first Fanoclast meeting.

Naturally I set their minds at ease with helpful advice. Don't tell Ted White about your operation. Don't play cards with Richard Brandt. Don't stare directly into Frank Lunney's eyes. Shelby Vick always smiles at someone just before he fiores up the chainsaw. Helpful stuff like that.

What a joy it must be for them to have such counsel so near at hand!

The Morning of the Night Before

It wasn't long after awaking at 5:30am that I found myself working on the signs and emcee's cribsheets for *Fannish Feud*. I needed to finish preparations for Saturday's game show before 9:00, when Ross would arrive to take possession of his computer.

As I typed in the 60-pt answers to be tacked to the cork board as contestants gave correct guesses, I congratulated myself for coming up with such an easy, time-saving method. The original idea was to cut thin cardboard sheets into rectangles of the proper size and then have Ross letter the answers in his impeccable hand.

It was, perhaps, hisimpeccability that saved Ross from all this drudgery. Ross' well-known impeccability results from exacting attention to detail and painstaking precision. Even his computer disk labels are multi-colored works of art. That kind of stuff takes time. Days, weeks, eons. I imagined him writing three or four placards for each of the 17 questions, and I realized that he might still be artistically crafting beautiful answer cards when Corflu ended... Corflu Nashville, that is.

I took Ross off the hook by putting together a **Publish It Easy** template that put four answers on a standard 8-1/2x11 page. Joyce had already tabulated the answers, so all I had to do was figure out the percentages (to determine point values) and type the info in the prtee-set spaces.

I zipped through the questions, thinking deep and enobling thoughts about the majesty

of computer technology. I was at one with the digiverse.

Then I ran the answers off on the laser printer. I had 20 pages of answers on the screen, but only 10 slid out of the printer. I compared page for page and, sure enough, only the even-numbered ones had worked! I tried it again with the same outcome, by which time it was almost 9am.

I scurried back to my office and reworked the pages, redrawing text frames from scratch rather than using cut-and-paste to extend the template through the document. Each redrawn frame needed new type, of course, and it had to be properly centered within the boundaries again, too.

I was determined to spend the morning working, so I put everything aside until about noon, when I returned to the *Fannish Feud* sign problem. While everyone grabbed a quick lunch, I grabbed Ross' computer and ran off another set of answers. This time, they all came out as planned.

After lunch, business surrendered to fanac. Ben Wilson and Cathi Copeland, our bridal couple, took time from their errands to pitch in on the con. I set the four-page program book to running, did a little collating on **Swerve #2** and prepared to greet the first arrivals for the Kick Off Party.

Corflu Vegas had arrived.